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SONNETS AND EPIGRAMS
ON SACRED SUBJECTS
REV. T. E. BRIDGETT



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SONNETS AND EPIGRAMS, ETC.
ON SACRED SUBJECTS

ABERDEEN UNIVERSITY PRESS

SONNETS AND EPIGRAMS

ON

SACRED SUBJECTS

BY

REV. T. E. BRIDGETT

OF THE CONGREGATION OF THE MOST HOLY REDEEMER

Author of

"Life of Blessed Thomas More," "Lyra Hieratica," etc.

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1898

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TO
BLESSED THOMAS MORE,
POET,
EPIGRAMMATIST
AND
DEVOUT CONTEMPLATIVE,
AS WELL AS
MARTYR,
THIS LITTLE BOOK IS OFFERED
BY A LOVING CLIENT.

P R E F A C E.

Not perfect diamonds, blazing in the light ;
Not gems of sapphire or of amethyst ;
But scanty tricklings from a lime-stone roof,
Shaping themselves to pointed stalactites,
Or humble stalagmites that upward tend,
Of curious fashion and diaphanous ;
With here and there a crystal group, to eyes
That kindly look, of faint cerulean tint :
Such are the stones in this small cabinet.

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SONNETS.

OTHER WORLDS.

And are those glorious stars unpeopled all?
Lives there no thought outside our human race?
Men scan the heavens—does no celestial face
Turn wondering to our planetary ball?
Who knows if yet to science it may fall
To find a bridge o'er interstellar space,
That we those lords of other worlds may trace,
And message send responsive to their call?

O world incredulous! Accept the word
By Christ revealed: Beyond the farthest star,
In highest heaven, most loving friends there are,
By our repentant sighs their joy is stirr'd;
We strike our breasts, the echo wakes their
praise;
And they have charge to hallow all our ways.

THE ANGELS' THEATRE.

'Tis not the music of revolving spheres
Draws angel hosts to visit our small earth ;
They come not here to mingle with our mirth,
Or watch the progress of the brightening years.
They come, as comes the merchant, where he hears
That pearls abound, to him of highest worth ;
For angels thrill with joy when faith gives birth
In sinners' eyes to pearls of contrite tears.

They come to feed the starving Lazarus
With dainties from their own celestial feast ;
They come to tend the lowliest and least ;
For so our God has charged concerning us ;
They throng, as to a theatre, to see
How martyrs win the palm of victory.

BETHLEHEM.

Our Lady about to enter the cave, speaks.

“ My God and Father, Father of my Son,
Thy Son and mine, oh ! grace of the Most
High !

This is the place foretold, the hour is nigh
When men shall gaze upon our Blessed One.
Thy hand has led me hither ; be it done
To me according to Thy word ; Thine eye
Is on this lowly cave ; Thou wilt supply
A cradle for the heir of David’s throne.

“ The shades of eve are falling on the plain
Where David led his sheep, his breast aflame
With faith and pray’r, and in Thy mighty
Name

He slew the bear and lion, and was fain
To meet Goliath ; Joseph too and I
Await Thy mercies under Bethlehem’s sky.”

THE NAME OF JESUS.

'Twas Mary's secret first, that Holy Name,
 Above all names, her promised Son should bear ;
 Nor to St. Joseph would she aught declare
 Till God's good time, to clear her virgin fame.
 What rapturous joy was hers, when Gabriel came
 In dream to Joseph, and that favoured pair
 Could speak the name predestined, and could
 share
 With priestly Zachary its high acclaim.

Emmanuel is born, a nameless Child ;
 Eight days in awe His Mother's lips refrain,
 Till in the mystic rite the Undefined
 Pours out His Blood, and Joseph's lips intone
 " His name is Jesus " ; while th' angelic strain
 Takes up the hymn before th' Eternal Throne.

PRESENTATION IN THE TEMPLE.

Ecce habes par turturum, senem justum et viduam anum, utrumque desiderio Redemptoris gemebundum.—Guerricus, Abbas.

A pair of turtle doves Our Lady bears
 To purchase back from God her Child Divine ;
 Within her eyes the lights of Christmas shine ;
 The shepherds' Peace and Glory still she hears ;
 The Name of Jesus, source of all her fears
 And all her joys, she whispers at the shrine,
 Whence she will bear Him back without repine,
 To work God's will throughout the coming years.

A pair of doves she brings, and in God's fane
 The voice melodious of doves is heard ;
 For Simeon chants his glad, triumphant strain,
 While Anne, responsive to the heavenly word,
 Most sweetly murmurs to the longing choir
 The speedy grant of Israel's desire.

THE FIRST TEMPTATION.

“Art thou the Son of God? Now prove thy
Name,

And bid these flinty stones be nutrient bread ;
Such fast as thine has surely merited
Divine relief ; thy rightful honour claim.”
Thus spake the fiend, hoping to bring to shame
A saint too rash. But Jesus meekly said :—
“Not on bread only mortal man is fed ;
Each word of God builds up his heavenly frame”.

Dear hungering Lord ! Wast Thou not thinking
then

Of that first wonder, water changed to wine?
Of those twin multitudes of eager men
On bread miraculous by Thee sustained?
Of listening nations, with a “faith unfeigned,”
To whom Thy Flesh and Blood are food
Divine?

THE SECOND TEMPTATION.

"See from this pinnacle yon crowd, and leap,
 Leap boldly, for God's angels shall upbear
 (Is it not written ?) those who boldly dare,
 From evil chance their venturous feet to keep.
 Float slowly down ; majestically sweep
 Over their lifted heads ; with streaming hair
 And hands outstretch'd thy godlike Name
 declare ;
 Then drop to earth and godlike honours reap."

The wily plan, for Simon Magus fit,
 The Meek One spurns with words of Holy
 Writ :—

"Thy God thou shalt not tempt". His beam-
 ing eye
 Ere long within those temple courts shall note
 The widow's mite ; His ear shall catch the sigh
 Of him whose hand a contrite bosom smote.

THE THIRD TEMPTATION.

Upon the summit of a mountain high
 The feet of Jesus stand, and at His side
 Takes heart the fiend twice baffled. Far and
 wide
 The world is stretched beneath its Master's eye.
 "See," says the tempter, "where the wonders lie
 Of Egypt ; see where Grecian arts preside ;
 Where Rome extends her conquests and her
 pride :
 All these are mine to give or to deny."

The Shepherd's eyes His wandering flocks survey :
 Glow they with zeal for God ? or do the tears
 From pity's fount those blessed orbits fill ?
 Or turns His prescient gaze to Calvary's hill ?
 "God only man shall worship and obey"—
 'Tis all He says ; too much for Satan's ears.

THE FIRST DISCIPLES.

“ Rabbi, where dwellest Thou ? ” The Lord
replies

To those two earnest seekers : “ Come and see ” ;
For He was Lord of perfect courtesy,
And drew them to Him with His gentle eyes.
Some humble shelter from th’ inclement skies
Is all His palace ; or beneath a tree
He spreads their scanty meal ; on bended knee
They listen, while the night unnoticed flies.

Oh ! happy hearers ; for the heavenly Dove,
Which they had seen upon the Master rest,
Within their swelling bosoms builds His nest ;
They hear the voice still speaking from above :
“ This is My Son beloved ! ” Happy we,
If, called by God, we straightway “ come and see ” .

NAZARETH.

O Mother, hast thou heard the cruel deed ?
 Thy Son, thy Jesus, thy Most Holy One,
 Of God Most High the Sole Begotten Son ;
 The Flower¹ which thou did'st bear of heavenly
 seed,
 The promised Flower to spring from Jesse's reed ;
 Which thou did'st watch unfolding to the sun
 Its sacred petals, as the years did run,
 And perfect Flower to perfect Bud succeed :—

Him, from the synagogue, where oft He prayed,
 The Nazarenes have dragged, and from the hill
 Would fain have headlong cast, had He not stayed
 By His Almighty Power their ruthless will.
 He would not let the horror of His death
 Rest on His cherished home, His Mother's
 Nazareth.

¹ Those who called Our Lord, contemptuously, a Nazarene, unconsciously recalled the prophecy that from the trunk of Jesse, *i.e.*, the decayed royal family, should come forth a sprout (*Nétser*), a rod and flower. It is disputed whether Our Lady is designated by the rod. It is certain that Our Lord Jesus Christ was the promised Flower.—ISAIAH xi. 1.

THE TRANSFIGURATION.

See, glory lights the Galilean hill,
 And with His saints the Lord holds converse
 high,
 Of work for Him prepared, and drawing nigh,
 By which our earth the courts of heaven shall fill.
 Say, Moses ; say, Elias ; by your thrill
 Of awful rapture, when the Lord passed by
 On Sinai and on Horeb, can your eye
 Foresee an ecstasy diviner still ?

When Son with Sire for man beloved shall plead,
 What joy divine His human heart shall flood ?
 What pomp triumphant shall that treaty
 grace ?
 Hush ! for they talk of wrath for sin decreed.
 Our Saviour's anguish and His sweat of blood ;
 He speaks and listens with resplendent face.

SIMON OF CYRENE.

Can man become a saint against his will ?

Of Simon of Cyrene hear the tale :—

He seeks the holy city for the sale
Of garden stuff, or haply to fulfil
Some sacred rites upon Moriah's hill.

He nears the gate, when lo ! 'mid women's wail
And shouts of men, he sees One deadly pale
Lie crushed beneath a cross, yet living still.

He stops in pity, but the soldiers spy

His stalwart form, and, spite of protest loud,
Force him to share that cross to Calvary.

By grace divine beneath that burden bowed
He sees the Lord of glory—Jesus now
With heavenly bliss repays His yoke-fellow.

“IN MEMORY OF ME.”

Who shall forget the words He spoke that night,
“Do this, My friends, in memory of Me”?
In memory of Him whose charity
Constrained Him to His death with strange de-
light.

What varied mysteries in Him unite !
The Maid o’ershadowed, glad Nativity,
And cruel Death, all throng our memory,
As grains and grapes make up the mystic Rite.

And still the great Commemoration grows ;
The Names of Jesus’ later guests, with those
Who sat with Him at table, are entwined ;
While every faithful soul lays up a store
Of eucharistic memories, enshrined
With that great Memory for evermore.

OUR LORD'S FEET.

“I judge me all unworthy to untie
The shoes from off His feet,” the Baptist said ;
And Simon at those feet, in utter dread,
“A sinful man,” could only prostrate lie.
Yet sinful, weeping, Magdalen drew nigh,
Upon His feet her precious balm to shed ;
While Nicodemus in those gashes red
With Joseph wrought, Christ to uncrucify.

And I, good God ! yes I, must touch those feet,
And kiss and worship them by priestly law ;
And by those wounds for mercy must entreat,
And from those wounds must heavenly graces
draw ;
O Lady dear, teach me with purest hands
To spread His winding-sheet or swathing bands.

EPIGRAMMATICAL MUSINGS.

PART I.

ON THE GOSPELS.

IN A PLANET.

"This earth is but a planet of the sun ;
 The sun itself of myriad worlds but one ;
 What likelihood then, that God should come on
 earth,
 And take man's flesh by superhuman birth ?
 Such fables leave to men whose ignorant dream
 Thought earth the centre and themselves sup-
 reme."

Not so ; our fathers were less gross than we,
 Nor reckoned bulk a part of majesty.
 The God of Christians was not born in Rome,
 Nor in Jerusalem was placed His home.
 "The least of cities," blessed Bethlehem, gave
 Only a cattle-pen within a cave.
 'Twas Godlike thus to come ; for God is great
 Within Himself, nor needs our paltry state.
 He fills all space ; to Him, who made them all,
 The smallest things are great, the greatest small.

A philosophic, astronomic God,
 Would dwell in central spheres, and by His nod
 Direct the comets, and make suns to blaze ;
 While scientific bodies, in amaze
 Would analyse the spectrum of His rays.

A CHANGELESS GOD.

Let him ask in faith, nothing wavering. . . . Every best gift cometh from the Father of lights, with whom is no change nor shadow of alteration.—S. JAMES i.

A changeless God, yet making heaven and earth !
 A changeless God, yet taking human birth !
 A changeless God, yet moved by creature's prayer !
 Are these not paradoxes hard to bear ?

Not paradox, but mystery divine,
 Where Infinite and finite both combine.
 In one eternal Act God's being lives,
 Creates, becomes Incarnate, hears and gives.
 In God from all eternity the plan ;
 The time and the succession are in man.
 We call God angry, pitiful, appeased,
 As we are guilty, or from guilt released ;
 Yet are we guilty, or from guilt set free,
 Not by our fancy, but by God's decree.

Central in heaven stands the glorious sun,
 Yet seems a swift and daily course to run ;
 His disc is bright, because no clouds are seen,
 It pales, because earth's vapours intervene :—
 " Father of lights," rebuke us not if we
 In casual talk our changes give to Thee.

CRIB AND CROSS.

A mystery too deep for human eye,
A Crib, a Crib to cradle the Most High !
A mystery too sweet for human breast,
A Cross, a felon's Cross, for th' Ever Blest.

Oh ! who can estimate the Christian's loss
If Gospel story knew no Crib or Cross ?
Yet so it should have been, had Israel's priests
Not left their Christ to stable with the beasts.

Had they God's temple not with robbers shared,
But for the Son " His Father's house " prepared ;
No victim then on Calvary had died ;
That Father's house would still be Israel's pride.

But Thou, O God, who drawest good from ill,
By men's perversity hast wrought Thy will ;
And we have Christmas joys and Lenten tears,
A Crib and Cross to stir our hopes and fears.

OUTCAST.

See Emmanuel, God with men,
Born within a cattle-pen,
With the ox and ass to share
Shelter from the midnight air.
Carefully we house and feed
Every beast that serves our need :
Seems He not to say : “ At least,
Treat Me as you treat your beast ” ?

Nay, O Majesty Divine,
No such lot on earth was thine ;
Birds of rapine, beasts of prey—
Thou wert more forlorn than they.
Deep beneath our vengeful feet
Makes the fox his safe retreat ;
High above our threatening arm
Keeps the hawk her nestlings warm.
Homeless, houseless, Lord, wert Thou,
Pillowless Thy aching brow ;
On the bare earth Thou did'st sleep,
Dreaming of Thy wandering sheep.
As we hunt the noxious kite,
So did men Thy love requite ;
As the ravening wolf we slay
So did men Thy love repay.

THE MANGER.

Coming down from heaven to earth,
Why, O God, so poor a birth?
Why is Thy first infant-bed
Laid within a cattle-shed?

Would'st Thou teach us to provide
Altar-Crib for Thee to hide,
Where the shepherd and the mage
May atone for Herod's rage?

Would'st Thou tell, in mystic guise,
Of Thy loving Heart's device,
Heavenly food of man to be,
Reckless of Thy Majesty?

Would'st Thou bid us house the poor,
Wandering still from door to door?
Shall we welcome give to them
In a Christian Bethlehem?

O Thou Wanderer Divine
Lo, we welcome Thee and Thine,
Foster-Father, Mother-Maid,
With the poor who need our aid.

THE MAID-MOTHER.

Sin never laid its blighting hand
Upon the heart which God had planned
For His own resting-place ;
Nor ruffled by one passing thought
The virgin bosom, where He sought
A mother's fond embrace.

When Jesus hangs on Mary's neck,
No timid conscience bids her check
The torrents of her bliss ;
Where angels tremble to behold,
By grace of motherhood made bold,
She worships with a kiss.

Like flowers they twine in close caress,
And answering looks of love express
The bond that makes them one ;
For heart in heart, as eye in eye,
Within each other mirrored lie
The Mother and the Son.

ST. JOSEPH.

“Others He saved, Himself He cannot save” :—
Thus by His cross the mocking bigots rave,
Incredulous to prodigies of grace,
By deeds of love more spiteful made and base.
But thou, St. Joseph, flying with the Child,
From Herod’s sword throughout that desert wild,
Though thou of Godlike power hast seen no sign,
No tempest calmed, no water turned to wine,
Dost still believe that He whom thou must save
Shall rescue thee triumphant from the grave.

THE HOLY FAMILY.

Bow down, ye angel hierarchies,
And see, how human charities
Diviner bonds on earth can tie
Than those which your bright ranks ally.

Ye, whose immortal being’s flame
Full kindled from the Eternal came,
Behold the world’s Creator rest,
A Babe upon a Mother’s breast.

And while your eyes enraptured see
 The Equal, Undivided Three,
 Learn from that vision to admire
 God subject to an earthly sire.

Ye know no parents, child, nor bride ;
 No homes your love with God divide ;
 Yet, angel-lips may humbly bless
 This Virgin-Mother's fruitfulness.

And angel-hearts may glow with pride
 To minister at Joseph's side,
 Who knows no earthly cares but these—
 God's Mother and her Son to please.

Now, heaven and earth are reconciled
 Around the crib of Mary's Child ;
 And flesh and blood shall emulate
 The glories of the angelic state :—

While those whom marriage bonds unite
 The Virgin-spouses shall invite,
 To win from Jesus, by their prayers,
 A blessing on their household cares.

THE CLAIMS OF THE REDEEMER.

I. TO BE LOVED BY ALL.

'Tis much to win a chosen few
To love us with affection true—
But who shall every heart demand,
In every age and every land ?
And who this tribute would enforce
Not only by the heart's remorse,
But e'en by threats compel the weak
Sincerest love from God to seek ?
One Man has thus aspired to reign,
One Man alone, nor He in vain.

II. TO COMFORT ALL.

'Tis much one wretch's load to bear,
To soothe one soul oppressed by care ;
But, Lord, Thou callest all to Thee,
And wilt from all their burdens free ;
Thou hast an easy yoke for all,
A load that will no shoulder gall.
Ah ! never but by God-made-Man,
Was there conceived so bold a plan ;
Yet Thou wert meek and humble, Lord,
And millions bless Thy gracious word.

III. TO JUDGE ALL.

'Tis much, too much, for human mind,
To judge one being of its kind ;
To sift the merits of one deed,
And rightly portion out its meed.
Yet, Lord, Thou claimest as thy own
To summon all before Thy throne ;
Of countless souls the thoughts to know
And each one doom to weal or woe.
The wine-press Thou for all hast trod,
Our Saviour-Judge, our King and God.

VAIN PLOTTING.

I. BETWEEN TWO THIEVES.

Ah ! senseless Jews ! In vain the miscreants hoped
 To obscure the innocence of Mary's Son.
 Their cunning plot was turned against themselves ;
 One railing malefactor felt his heart
 Moved strangely to defend the injured Man
 Who " did no wrong," yet hung so meekly there
 And prayed for those that cursed Him ; then the
 light
 Of faith interpreted what Pilate wrote,
 And would not alter ; then the prayer of faith
 Acknowledged Jesus in His agony
 The King of life eternal ; and the King
 Repaid His confessor with paradise.
 The world since then has worshipped with the
 thief
 The immortal King Who died on Calvary.

II. BETWEEN TWO SAINTS.

But lo ! a hand would rob Him of His crown !
The modern sophist, with mock reverence
Proclaims His innocence and purity,
And puts Him in his catalogue of saints ;
Hoping that such bright company may hide
His glory from the dazzled eyes of men.
In vain they plot ; the " Son of man " shall ne'er
Confounded be with sinner nor with saint.
Above the altar see Him pictured here,
In splendour bright, yet with a human heart,
And glorious saints stand by on either side.
There Peter stands and holds the keys of heaven,
There Paul, the mighty preacher, rests his hands
Upon the sword by which he sealed his faith ;
Their glory, all derived from Jesus, sheds
Its radiance back upon the Sacred Heart.
For Peter reigns, and holds the heavenly keys,
Because His Master's Godhead he proclaimed ;
And Paul, who raged against the Holy Name,
Is Jesus' captive, sent that Name to bear
To princes and to peoples, and to teach
The love of Him whose love can ne'er be known.

TWO VISIONS OF JESUS.

Bartimeus, 'mid the throng,
 Hears that Jesus moves along ;
 Faith and hope inspire his heart :
 " Mercy, mercy, Lord, impart ! "
 " Say, what shall I do for thee ? "
 " Lord," he says, " that I may see."
 Quick his withered eyeballs shine,
 Gazing on that Face Divine.

Saul of Tarsus lifts his eyes
 Proudly to the Syrian skies,
 " Vengeance, vengeance, Lord, I thirst,
 On these men of creed accurst ! "
 Dashed to earth, bereft of sight,
 Hear him own the heavenly light :
 " Lord, what wilt Thou have me do,
 Proof to give of sorrow true ? "

Christian, learn with Saul to ask
 What is thy appointed task ;
 Like the beggar learn to cry
 While thy Saviour passeth by.

Let Him light or darkness give,
 So that thou but learn to live ;
 Raise thee up or cast thee down,
 So that thou His Presence own.

NATHANAEL.

Nathanael, born of Jacob's race,
 An Israelite indeed,
 Within his garden's sheltered space
 Bids Israel's Saviour speed.

Comes Philip breathless : " We have found
 Him of whom prophets write ;
 Nay, come and see ; though strange the sound,
 Your eyes shall bless the sight ".

What means the Master's gracious smile,
 When those two friends draw near ?
 Why doubts that man devoid of guile ?
 What fills his heart with fear ?

He fears like Mary, when from heaven
 Her praises first were brought.
 Oh ! well may praise to those be given,
 Who tremble at the thought.

“ An Israelite indeed behold,
 From guile and malice free ! ”
 “ Sir, who can secrets thus unfold ?
 And whence this praise to me ? ”

“ Fear not, Nathanael,” Christ replies,
 “ Beneath the fig-tree’s shade,
 Ere Philip called, my watchful eyes,
 Upon thy heart were laid.”

Then, clear as water from a spring,
 From out Nathanael’s heart,
 The cry bursts forth : “ True Israel’s King,
 True Son of God, Thou art ”.

The King divine his faith repays
 By pledge of grace supreme ;
 That he should see with open gaze
 What Jacob saw in dream.

SEEN THROUGH THE MASTER'S EYES.

The merry birds nor sow nor reap,
Nor gather store for wintry days ;
But life-long holiday they keep,
And take the feast that God purveys.
The sparrows' God, with tenderer care,
Counts every hair upon your head ;
Can then your Father spurn the prayer
His children make for daily bread ?
Your human wants He knows and heeds,
And all this world that He hath planned
The affluent storehouse of your needs,
Lies open to His bounteous hand.
Your Father trust, yet measure not
His Providence by gifts of earth,
Nor deem yourselves by God forgot,
When tried by poverty and dearth.
Doubt not your heavenly Father's care,
Though starving children round you moan ;
That pitying father-love you bear
Is but the image of His own.

The lily's fleeting robe is dyed
 By God with hues of lovelier sheen,
 Than Solomon, in all his pride,
 Could spread before th' Arabian Queen.
 God's spendthrift Providence, be sure,
 That in the lowliest flower you trace,
 Leaves Godlike man bereft and poor,
 To clothe him with immortal grace.

Thus to His friends the Master spake ;
 And well they knew those hands divine,
 Could in the wilds a banquet make,
 Or change the water into wine.
 Yet left He oft those friends forlorn,
 And chose Himself the poor man's lot ;
 Their hunger stayed with ears of corn,
 Or seeking figs He found them not.
 At length the Flower of Jesse's rod,
 With hue so fair and scent so sweet,
 Lay broken by the hand of God,
 And trampled under sinners' feet.
 He who of flowers and birds had taught—
 Such was His heavenly Father's plan—
 Was counted as a thing of naught,
 A mangled worm and not a man.

A REBUKE ACCEPTED.

If you, being evil, etc.—LUKE xi. 13.

“ Bad as you are, you are not wholly bad,
 Your children’s hearts you gladden, and are glad ;
 Bad as you are, there reigns a God above
 Who loves you with a perfect Father’s love ;
 Bad as you are, your God cannot deny
 His Holy Spirit to His children’s cry.”

And I, not wholly bad, O gracious Lord,
 Bad as I am, I love Thee for that word.

AN HUMBLE RETORT.

Thou canst not make one hair white or black.—MAT. v. 36.

“ One slender hair you make not black or white,”
 Thus does the Master scorn our paltry might.
 Ah ! pardon, Lord ; since Thou, by Will Divine,
 Couldst change th’ insipid water into wine,
 I care not, though my youthful locks be shed ;
 Plant *Thou* white hairs of wisdom on my head.

“NOT LIKE THE REST.”

“I thank my maker I’m not like the rest,”
 ’Twas thus a Mausoleum eased its breast ;
 “The tombs around are broken, crumbling stones,
 Uncouth receptacles of vulgar bones.
 I am pure marble, white, and carved with skill,
 And words of Holy Writ my borders fill.
 I thank him most I am not like the mound
 That lies out yonder, cumbering the ground.”
 The Sexton standing by, cried “Faugh ! how vile
 The stench exhaling from this sculptured pile !”
 He turned, and bending o’er the poor man’s sod,
 Plucked thence a violet, and gave thanks to God.

“THE REST OF MEN.”

“He that is Great hath done great things in me ;”
 So sings Our Lady—so the Pharisee ;
 But she, blest creature ! tells of mercy poured,
 From age to age, on all who fear the Lord :
 While he points scornfully at “all the rest,”
 And spurns the hand that strikes a contrite breast.
 What wonder, then, though Pharisees may rail,
 “The rest of men” should bid Our Lady, Hail !
 Should call her Queen of mercy, trust her prayers,
 And feel that all her blessedness is theirs ?

WASTE.

I.

“Waste not the ointment,” Judas cries,
“Upon the Master’s head ;
Go, sell it for three hundred pence,
To feed the poor with bread.”
“Waste not your soul,” the world repeats,
“In contemplations vain ;
Go teach the ignorant and poor,
Or soothe the sufferer’s pain.”
Oh, goodly zealots of the poor,
Who sell their God for pay ;
And still whate’er their clutch escapes,
They count it thrown away.

II.

With sordid heart at Mary’s waste
The wily Judas sneers ;
Till Christ with pledge of endless fame
Her loving spirit cheers.
With gentler accents Martha pleads
Against her sister’s rest ;

But Christ extols the better choice,
 Which none shall e'er molest.
 Then, Mary, heed not, since from Christ
 Thy praises thou hast heard ;
 Waste, waste thy ointment on His head,
 Thy soul upon His word.

FREEDOM.

MAT. xviii. 6-14.

'Tis not our Father's will that souls should die ;
 Yet die they may for all eternity ;
My soul may die ; or I, alas ! may kill
 My brother's soul against his Father's will :—
 A soul committed to an angel's care
 Yet from his hands inveigled by my snare !
 Mysterious truths ! yet this right well I see,
 That heaven and hell are only for the free :
 Better be freely crippled here, than go
 With reckless freedom to a hopeless woe ;
 Better sink headlong 'neath the ocean wave,
 Than slay a soul which Jesus died to save.
 O Truth, O Life ! may this Thy solemn word
 Pierce through my spirit like a two-edged sword.

OPPORTUNITIES.

I.

Near to the rich man's door, from day to day,
Poor Lazarus in rags and ulcers lay ;
There placed by God, to stir that bloated soul
To faith and charity and self-control.
In vain ; neglected and despised he lay,
The rich man's nuisance in the public way.

Death changes all. The rich man, beggar turned,
In vain asks pity from the saint he spurned.
In vain ; for now far off their lots are cast,
A gulf divides them never to be passed.
The grace is lost, the prayer is made too late,
Which, made in time, had changed the wretch's
fate.

II.

So near, so near, close hanging by His side ;
So far, so far, the light of faith denied.
Like those poor thieves, how many, standing near,
Christ's loving Presence, only mock and jeer.
Give light, good Lord, that, like that penitent,
They may confess Thee in Thy sacrament.

TEN REVELATIONS OF GOD'S WAYS.

No one knoweth the Father, but the Son, and he to whom it shall please the Son to reveal Him.—MAT. xi. 27.

I. THE TOWER IN SILOE.—LUKE xiii. 4.

The tower falls crashing on the crowd :
 Wilt thou, unhurt, with judgment proud,
 Of crimes the special victims see,
 Or of unmasked hypocrisy ?
 Nay, tear not thou, with hasty zeal,
 From God's dark mysteries the seal ;
 Weep rather then, with wholesome dread,
 Lest lightning strike *thy* stubborn head.

II. BE YOU PERFECT.—MAT. v. 48.

But do the rain and sunshine fall
 On both sides of the boundary wall
 That parts the fields of good and bad ;
 Then let thy little heart be glad ;
 God cares for good and bad alike,
 Knows when to spare and when to strike ;
 Learn thou from God thy goods to spend
 On enemy as well as friend.

III. THE TWO SPARROWS.—MAT. x. 29.

The smallest birds that fall to earth
 Are rated at some trivial worth ;
 But thou, O man, what price is thine
 Redeemed, immortal, and divine ?
 They had their day ; but thine shall last
 When sin, and wrong, and death are past.
 Keep faith in God, the Good, the True,
 Nor fear what tyrants' hands can do.

IV. SOUL AND BODY.—LUKE xii. 5.

The Father's hand, that counts each hair
 Of those who in His service dare,
 Will cast the coward—mark it well !
 Both soul and body into hell.
 No tyrant He, though far more dread ;
 By sin alone His ire is fed ;
 Then fear not men, fear God alone,
 Lest He a sinful child disown.

V. SURLY CHILDREN.—LUKE vii. 32.

Your Father would your hearts from sin
 By threats or condescension win ;
 And will you then, like children, sit
 In moody or splenetic fit,
 Refuse to mourn the dead, or play
 At marriage pomp, with dances gay ?
 Poor peevish boys ! God's children wise
 His wisdom see in every guise.

VI. THE OBDURATE.—LUKE xiii. 34.

E'en as the hen, from hovering kites,
 Her chickens to her wings invites,
 So Christ from God's most just decree,
 Would His repentant children free.
 But they their stubborn course will run,
 And crucify God's only Son ;
 For mercy they will cry too late,
 When all their house is desolate.

VII. THE CHURCH'S MISSION.—MAT. x. 12-15.

Go, scatter blessings far and wide,
 Cry "Peace to men" on every side;
 On sons of peace your peace shall rest,
 And you shall be, in blessing, blest.
 But scatter dust from off your feet,
 A symbol for the scorner meet.
 Than Sodom and Gomorrha worse,
 There waits for him a deeper curse.

VIII. PEARLS.—MAT. xiii. 45.

Would you the laws of heaven know,
 Mark well men's prudence here below.
 Does not the merchant, in his quest
 Of goodly pearls, sell all the rest?
 So Christ for souls, at reckless cost,
 Sells all, and counts it wisely lost;
 Count we our pearl the love of God,
 All else beneath our feet be trod.

IX. GOD'S HOLINESS.—MAT. v. 26.

Alas ! what idle words are flung
To reckless ears by reckless tongue ;
Yet He who bears a two-edged sword
Shall try in judgment every word.
Now quickly pay the debt of sin,
The grace of God *now* quickly win ;
For the last farthing must be paid
In prison for each debt delayed.

X. THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN.—MAT. xxii. 2-10.

The King his heralds sends afar ;
'Tis not to levy troops for war ;
He calls his subjects to a feast,
Calls all, the greatest and the least.
Those honoured subjects "go their way,"
Or spitefully the heralds slay ;
The King must force the city's scum
Within his banquet-hall to come !

CANA.

Go forth and see King Solomon in the diadem wherewith his mother crowned him, in the day of his espousals, and in the day of the joy of his heart.—CANT. iii. 11.

Come, see King Solomon : the glorious youth
 Is seated on his father's throne, his heart
 With joy o'erflowing, and with gratitude
 To Bethsabée, his mother, by whose prayer
 He wears the diadem of kingly power.
 His mother comes, and rising on his throne
 He bows in reverence, and the courtiers place
 The mother's throne upon her son's right hand.
 "One little grace, O King, refuse me not."
 "My mother, ask ; for 'tis not meet that I
 Should turn away thy face," her son replies
 Such was the filial reverence of the King.

But come, behold a Monarch greater far
 That Solomon ; at Cana's marriage feast
 He sits, and words of grace from off His lips
 Fall copiously for all ; when, in His ear

A gentle whisper sounds, from One whose voice
 Had brought Him down to earth, whose voice
 had given

For thirty years the law to all His life.

“My Son, they have no wine,” His Mother says,
 With thoughtful love for men, with boundless trust
 In His almighty power and loving heart.

“What is there, Woman, between me and thee?
 Mine hour is not yet come,” her Son replies.
 Thus Jesus seems to turn away her face.

His hour is not yet come ; yet Mary knows
 The hour ne’er came when she could be refused,
 And bids the servants wait upon His word.

Oh ! wiser Thou than Solomon, dear Lord ;
 Thy Mother too more honoured far than his ;
 For Bethsabée soon hid her face in shame,
 When Solomon, indignant at her prayer,
 Despite his royal word, swore speedy death
 Upon the man whose cause she undertook :
 While Jesus, seeming to refuse, does all
 And more than all, His Mother’s prayer had asked.

THE REDEEMER'S MOTHER.

O divine Vierge, je conçois quelque chose de si grand de vous,
que non seulement je ne le puis dire, mais encore mon esprit
travaille à se l'exprimer à lui-même.—BOSSUET.

The Church has taught both East and West
That whatsoe'er is choice in grace,
In nature whatsoe'er is best,
Unite in Mary's heart and face.
Her orators lack words to teach
The thought that Mary's name imparts ;
Her artists strive in vain to reach
Th' ideal of their kindling hearts.

Then, scoffers, babble not that she
Was fashioned first in times obscure—
The dream of monks' credulity,
The phantom of a faith impure ;
For monkish legend half so base
Has never moved the critic's scorn,
As that the very type of grace
Of sordid ignorance was born.

Less grossly they from truth depart
 Who hold that Mary's image first
 Was formed by the creative art
 Of men who great conceptions nursed.
 And yet, not so ; what Raphael sought
 In noblest lineaments to paint,
 Was but a body to the thought
 Which peasants share with sage and saint.

Man may invent a Juno's pride,
 Of Venus paint the sensuous charms,
 Not his that Holy Spirit's Bride,
 Whose beauty pride and lust disarms.
 It was not dreaming piety,
 Creative art, nor bull of pope,
 'Twas God's great love made her to be
 "Our Life, our Sweetness and our Hope".

THE GREAT LEGACY.

“Ungrateful country ! Rome, ungrateful Rome !
I die in willing exile ; thou, my home,
Shalt not possess my bones ; my tomb shall stand,
In proud disdain upon a foreign strand.”—

Thus dying Scipio spoke, and order gave
The indignant epitaph should mark his grave.
Not so my Saviour ; He, about to die
A cruel, shameful death on Calvary,
In memory of His death throughout all time
Bequeathed Himself—Victim and Feast sublime.

THE GREAT COMMEMORATION.

’Twere little for th’ Almighty and Most Wise
To thwart His petty creatures, and despise
Their puny plans ; ’tis Godlike when He bends
Their works of malice to His blessed ends.
O God, my God, how wondrous ’tis to see
Our darkness changed to light by Thy decree ;
To see the hateful Cross become the sign
Of man’s Redemption by Thy Blood divine,

And Thee on man Thy Flesh and Blood bestow
 While Judas sells them to Thy deadly foe ;
 What Jew and pagan plot in God's despite
 Transfigured to our worship's central rite.—
 A Transubstantiation more divine
 Than that we wonder at in bread and wine !

LOVE'S ECSTASY.

Whether in the body, I know not, or out of the body, I know not, God knoweth, rapt even to the third heaven.—2 COR. xii. 2.

If, reft of soul, Paul's body here remained,
 It might be so—God's power is not restrained ;
 If, body and soul the floor of heaven he trod,
 It might be so—'twere worthy of his God ;
 Rapt in that ecstasy of love he heard
 How Christ first spoke the sacramental word,
 By which He gives, in ecstasy of love,
 The very flesh that reigns in heaven above.

OUR LADY'S POWER. (A PARADOX.)

All things obey the command of God, even the Virgin; and all things obey the command of the Virgin, even God.—S. BERNARDIN of Sienna.

Well knew that captain, who, of old
 Bade sun and moon stand still,
 That God will hear the bold command
 Of an obedient will.

Faith triumphed over God—He served
 The servant of His grace ;
 And still the word of faith could pluck
 The mountain from its base.

Then say not : “ It is blasphemy ! ”
 When Christian hearts grow bold
 And bid God's Mother with her Son
 Her Mother's rights uphold.

For Mary's faith did more than move
 The mount, or check the sun,
 When to her womb th' Incarnate God
 Her lowly answer won.

God's will she loved ; and subject He
To her commands became ;
Giving a mother's rights to one
Who chose the handmaid's name.

Subject He was, because He reigned
Within His Mother's heart :
And Mary, while her God she ruled,
Played still the handmaid's part.

So now th' Almighty reigns supreme
O'er Mary's docile will ;
But what He moves her to command
He scorns not to fulfil.

Or think you Mary must in heaven
Her earthly power resign ?
And dares not guide that sceptred hand
Which used in hers to twine ?

Nay, jealousy exists not there
Where human pride has ceased ;
There Jesus girds His robes divine
And tends His servants' feast.

There first are last, and last are first ;
 God leaves yet keeps His throne ;
 And joys to do the will of those
 Who feared to do their own.

God's jealousy is zeal for truth
 Which only pride offends,
 His Majesty to lowly souls
 Unsullied condescends.

Let men who know their nothingness
 On empty pomp rely ;
 To stoop is God's prerogative
 The pomp of the Most High.¹

The humblest maid e'er knelt on earth
 Is queen in heaven above,
 Ruling the universe by right
 And ruling God by love.

¹ Cui nihil ad augendum fastigium superest, hic uno modo crescere potest, si se ipse submittat.—PLINIUS JUNIOR, *Paneg.* 71.

EPIGRAMMATIC MUSINGS.

PART II.

FAITH AND UNFAITH.

SWINISHNESS.

MARK V., 1-20.

The Legion, who in heaven were not content
 Unless with God they shared the Throne Divine,
 Now crave this favour only—to be sent
 Into the bellies of a herd of swine.
 The boon is granted ; God full oft in ire
 Grants men and devils what their hearts desire.
 “Go, leave our coasts,” the grumbling swineherds
 pray :

The boon is granted ; Jesus goes His way.
 So modern nations at the Church repine,
 Afraid to lose their devils or their swine.
 They have their will ; the Church is driven off ;
 Men triumph, angels weep, and demons scoff.

STOLIDITY.

That God the Son should be of woman born,
 Should contradicted live and die forlorn ;
 That He should fix His sacramental throne,
 From age to age, where few His Presence own ;
 These things are so prodigious, that they move
 The infidel to scoff, the saint to love ;
 While we, poor fools ! with neither taking part,
 Cling fast to faith, but “always err in heart”.

CONTRASTS.

Transit of Venus o'er the solar disk !
 Be quick, for great the profit or the risk ;
 Scatter your watchers to the world's confines ;
 Vie each with each, yet work on ordered lines.

O dreadful contrast with the sloth supine
 Of those who kept the oracles divine.
 A wondrous star gave token of the birth
 Of Him who rules the sun and stars and earth ;
 'Twas but a morning's walk to Bethlehem,
 Yet no one stirr'd from proud Jerusalem.

Degenerate priests, arouse yourselves and see
 That Herod sleeps not in his jealousy ;
 For he would baffle God by hook or crook,
 Would worm God's secrets from God's sacred book ;
 Would seek, with hypocritic astrolabe,
 The vanished star, then slay the God-sent Babe ;
 While neither star nor oracle can bring
 The chosen race to greet their promised King.

TEUTONIC.

What depth of thought in German heads,
 Of wit what brilliant strokes !
 Of Shakspeare's jokes they mysteries make,
 Of Christ's dear mysteries, jokes.

IN A CORNER.

"I am not mad, most noble Festus, no ;
 But speak in sober truth the things I know ;
 And thou, O King Agrippa, knowest well
 'Twas in no corner that these things befell."

Alas ! what boots a world-wide fact to those
 Who in the corner of their lusts repose ?
 Content in wilful ignorance to lie,
 Agrippa sneers, and puts the matter by.

Upon a mountain set by God, the Church,
 Like Paul, invites men to an easy search ;
 "Most noble Festus" hears with scornful ears,
 And weak Agrippa seeks not what he fears.

DULL ASSENT.

Now Shakspeare students through the land debate
 Of quarto and of folio, and the date
 Of late and early plays ; some lay great stress
 On double endings, others gravely guess
 The genuine reading of each smutty joke
 That Shakspeare's jesters at each other poke.
 Shakspeare be praised ! But thou, my soul, beware
 Lest one than Shakspeare greater far, compare
 Such eager trifling with the dull assent
 Thou to His words of light and life hast lent.

DAWDLING.

We run our eyes along the printed prayers,
Which ask for pardon, grace to shun the snares
Of evil spirits, grace to escape from hell,
And with the saints in heavenly bliss to dwell ;
And while the choir its quivering quavers sings,
We bid th' Almighty give us—all such things !

More earnestly the dog implores a bone,
More eagerly the child a glittering stone ;
And youth from youth, with more politeness far,
Requests a match to kindle his cigar.

TRIFLING.

Quod minimum est minimum est, sed in minimo fidelem esse maximum est.—S. GREG.

When Michael Angelo was told that he was wasting time on the details of a statue, he replied: "Trifles like these make up perfection, and perfection is no trifle".

Though trifles, given when God inspires,
Will trifles still remain,
The giving is no trifling thing,
And costs no trifling pain.
Yet choicest grace by him is lost,
Who trifles fears to lose ;
For he thinks triflingly of God,
Who trifles dares refuse.

A DRUDGE.

St. Joseph, through the desert wild,
 Supports the Virgin and her Child,
 Who ride upon a lowly ass,
 While angels worship as they pass.
 But Joseph's ass through all that throng
 Of angels slowly plods along,
 And thinks it hard to lay such loads
 For beasts to bear on stony roads.

Now choose thy part ! Dost thou delight
 To wait on Jesus, day and night,
 Like Joseph, on the weary road
 Glad homage paying to thy God ?
 Or dost thou not, unfaithful priest,
 Resembling Joseph's senseless beast,
 Misname a toil the priestly care
 Which angel hosts would proudly share ?

TREADMILL.

O royal priest, thy feet are on the stair
 Down which God's angels heavenly graces bear ;
 Thy tread be princely ; lift thy head on high ;
 Not like the convicts who on treadmill ply.

DISPUTING.

Too oft alas !
It comes to pass,
The grace of true contrition
We do not feel,
From angry zeal
To save its definition.

The Church is mute,
Yet schools dispute
How grace becomes "efficient,"
Till o'er the knot
Grown fierce and hot
They stifle grace "sufficient".

So, we are told,
Two misers old
To seize a hairbrush rushing,
Each other mauled
Till both were bald,
And had no hair for brushing.

SPECULATION.

Heu! malumus, semper quærendo per *cognitionem*, nunquam invenire quod quærimus, quam *amando* possidere id, quod non amatum, frustra etiam inveniretur.—PICO DELLA MIRANDOLA.

As children rove
Through field and grove,
With healthy circulation ;
While doctors' blood
Runs slow as mud
From health's investigation :—

So peasants rise
And scale the skies ;—
Much love and little thinking !
While we, with store
Of learned lore,
In apathy are sinking.

Though Newton found
Why worlds go round,
And pears and apples tumble ;
Boys light of pate
Walk firm and straight,
While Newtons limp and stumble.

So simple prayer,
With scanty fare,
Of old, made souls athletic ;
While ours grow weak,
In bodies sleek,
And libraries ascetic.

If, moved by fear,
We drop a tear,
We analyse it after ;
And if we smile,
We stop a while
And analyse our laughter.

We rather choose
Our pains to lose,
Our eyes with study blinding ;
Than loving find,
What, by the mind
Unloved, were not worth finding.

A READER.

Prævolat intellectus, manet affectus.—S. AUG.

Swift flew his thought, his will dragged slowly on,
 He saw, but did not, that which should be done ;
 He loved to read, but reading only served
 To show the road from which he daily swerved ;
 He threw such fuel on the fire of love
 Its sparks were smothered by the heap above ;
 And now he reaps his learning's sole reward—
 The " many stripes " of his offended Lord.

TIME AND SPACE.

How much did Plato and his school labour about the line and the angle and the point, and about even and odd, equal and unequal numbers, and such like cobwebs (for cobwebs are more useful to life than such textures) ; and having derived no profit from them either great or little, so he ended his life.—S. CHRYSOSTOM, hom. iv. in Ep. i., ad Cor.

His years of life he spent in doubts sublime,
 What is that entity which men call Time ;
 He travelled many a league from place to place,
 To ask if learned men believed in Space.
 At length Time passed for him, and all he got
 From God or man, was Space enough to rot.

AN OLD MAN'S LETTER.

TO NICHOLAS BARON MENGDEN.

DOWN, BECKENHAM, KENT,
5th June, 1879.

DEAR SIR,

I am much engaged, an old man and out of health, and I cannot spare time to answer your question fully—provided it can be answered. Science has nothing to do with Christ, except in so far as the habit of scientific research makes a man cautious in admitting evidence. For myself I do not believe that there ever has been any revelation. As for a future life, every man must judge for himself between conflicting vague probabilities.

Wishing you happiness,

I remain, dear sir,

Yours faithfully,

CHARLES DARWIN.¹

SOME COMMENTS.

I. "SCIENCE".

"Of Jesus science treats not, yea or nay :"
So writes the honoured teacher of our day.
Yet pause a while these ancient words to scan :
"We saw his form—a worm and not a man".
If for our God your science has no terms,
Give Him at least a place among your worms.

¹ Sent by Professor Haeckel to *Academy*, 4th Nov., 1882.

II. "I CANNOT SPARE TIME".

Though science knows not Christ, yet you would
find

The origin of forms of every kind ;
Could you not find a place for Him who said
He had not where to rest His wearied head,
Than foxes poorer and the nesting birds ?
Have you no time, old man, to weigh those words ?

III. "NO REVELATION".

Happier the earthworm, mute and deaf and blind,
Stretching its slimy length a leaf to find,
Than those who watch its progress through the sod,
Yet stretch no listening, loving soul to God.

IV. "HAPPINESS".

Future life is but a guess,
The Bible all a lie ;
Sir, I wish you happiness :
Study worms and die.

ALL MADE CLEAR.

The cell consists of matter called protoplasm, composed chiefly of carbon with an admixture of hydrogen, nitrogen and sulphur. These component parts, properly united, produce the soul and body of the animated world, and, suitably nursed, become man. With this single argument (!) the mystery of the universe is explained, the Deity annulled, and a new era of infinite knowledge ushered in.—Prof. HÆCKLE's Letter to German Association, 1877.

Thought is a movement of matter ; conscience also is a movement of matter.—MOLESCHOTT.

“ The cell, the cell, behold the Primal Cause ;
All life is matter, and obeys its laws ;
Both thought and will, deposits of the brain,
As true to law as is the fall of rain.”

So be it, friend ; but then our brains, alas !
Deposit rudely that you are an ass.
Is ours a false deposit ? Or are you
The only man whose cerebration's true ?

A HUMAN MOLE.

His proudest toil was grubbing up the earth
In search of bone-drifts, which to him were worth
More than all living men ; indeed 'tis said,
When once he found a very flat-shaped head,
His own skull cracked for joy ; in sober truth
His mouth would water at an ancient tooth ;

His eye would fill with tears, the while he hung
 Enraptured o'er a piece of fossil dung,
 Dropt myriad ages since by mastodon,
 And changed by myriad ages into stone.
 Show him in marble but the faintest trace
 Of bird or beast, and he could tell its race,
 Build it again in every bone and claw,
 And tell what food it took into its maw.
 Yet this ingenious Mole no vestige found
 Of God or Mind above or underground.

A CERTAIN APOSTATE.

He threw up his faith both in God and the
 Church,
 Because he had striven in vain
 All the knots to untie about reason and faith,
 Which the subtle scholastics maintain.
 So a man able-bodied and strong took to bed,
 And refused both to walk and to stand,
 Till the muscles and nerves of his legs he should
 know,
 And the system on which they are planned.

PRAYER.

Renan writes: "Prayer is useless. Man, in thy blindness, thou conceivest to thyself the Divinity as a judge whom men corrupt or gain over by importunity. Thou imaginest to thyself that the eternal Reason will let itself be influenced by thy supplications. But for these supplications—if God could hear them—his first duty would be to punish thee, as the first duty of a judge is to drive out of his house the pleader who comes with his solicitations or presents to gain him over to his cause. Be silent, miserable, self-interested one—adore the eternal order, and try to conform thy life to it."

The Priest of Nemi.

Translation of *Spectator*, 19th Dec., 1885.

*"Were there a God He would be wroth with prayer ;
For how should creatures, made from nothing, dare
With selfish hands to press the awful scale
That weighs the world, and make their end prevail?
To thrust their counsel on the Wise and Good,
And bend the Changeless to each changeful mood?"*

Nay, proud apostate, not since yesterday,
Nor from a fool have Christians learnt to pray;
We use not words an ignorant God to teach,
Nor seek by craft th' unwilling to o'er-reach.
We do not break a careless God's repose,
But "cast our care" on One who all things knows.
We wrong not the Allwise, if, when we pray,
We grasp the hand of Wisdom, lest we stray.
We ask, not give, advice ; seek strength and grace
God's will to do, His bounty to embrace.

To Renan this was once as noonday bright ;
He ceased to pray, and God withdrew His light.
Then would he strike his matches in the dark,
Enjoy the stench, and glory in the spark.

INFALLIBILITY.

The palpable fact that Pope Leo is a man of wholly different stamp from Pope Pius will strain to the utmost the principle of Papal Infallibility. If successive infallible Popes can differ as widely as the two Cardinals last elevated to the Papacy, the believing Roman Catholic is thrown back on an absolutely mechanical theory of inspiration; the Pope becomes a mere passive channel for the influence of the Holy Spirit, which breathes through him exactly in the same way, be he called Mastai Ferretti or Pecci, Medici or Borgia.—*Pall Mall Gazette*, 26th March, 1878.

REPLY.

Were Amos and Isaias both alike ?
 Yet both the lyre of prophecy could strike.
 Were Paul and Peter partners of one net ?
 Yet in one faith and martyrdom they met.
 If men inspired could teach in prose or verse,
 In lofty psalmody or proverbs terse,
 Could sing of war or pastoral tales indite,
 Now codes of law and now epistles write ;
 Why should our Popes in aught but truth concur—
 Be less of men, though guided not to err ?

Let writers of our newspapers consent
 To be of party views the instrument,
 To hide their names, that dazzled fools may see
 Naught but one mighty editorial We ;
 But who can dream that God is seen the less
 Where Unity and Freedom coalesce ?

ANOTHER REPLY.

Whence comes it that, while age to age succeeds,
 Not one of all the Popes his weakness pleads ?
 While Canterbury to the world declares,
 With needless candour, that his teaching shares
 The common lot of men to error prone.
 Let Borgia or Pecci fill the throne,
 They nothing vary in the claim they make,
 By Christ upheld, to speak as Peter spake.
 To you their words both false and impious seem ;
 Whence comes it then that all alike blaspheme ?
We have no fear, but why have *you* no hope,
 That time will bring a weak and stammering
 Pope ?

VAIN WORDS.

Let no man deceive you with vain words.—EPH. v. 6.

Hell is not just, you say ; I do but sin
 One moment, and the petty gain I win
 Or pleasure that I seek, cannot compare
 With quenchless flames and gnawings of despair.

Vain words ! Sin is not measured by the hour !
 Its measure is the Majesty and Power
 Of Him, whose law you scorn, whose Infinite
 Worth

You barter for the vilest trash of earth.
 Measure your folly by your loss and gain—
 A moment's pleasure for eternal pain !

Yet is it just, the Objector still complains,
 To damn a moment's sin with endless pains ?
 Your loss, vain man, is what you throw away ;
 A moment's loss is often loss for aye.
 Who casts his baggage overboard for sport
 Will be a beggar when he comes to port.

FATAL CHOICE.

Because you judge yourselves unworthy of eternal life, behold we turn to the Gentiles.—ACTS xiii. 46.

O foul humility of man !
 His worth he knows not, nor the plan,
 By which a pitying God would save
 The souls that will his mercy crave.
 God offers man His grace and love,
 Free pardon here and life above ;
 God deems him not unworthy, no,
 'Tis man himself who wills his woe.

VESSELS OF WRATH.

What if God, willing to show His wrath, and to make His power known, endured with much patience vessels of wrath, fitted for destruction.—ROM. ix. 22.

There are who bear the human name,
 Vessels of contumely and shame ;
 Vessels of wrath, and only fit
 To cast into the rubbish pit !
 'Twas not the Potter made them base ;
 The uncouth lump He would replace
 Upon His wheel to be recast :
 The clay is stubborn to the last.

DAILY GRACE.

(From Golden Words of Brother Giles.)

A learned doctor paced upon the shore,
 St. Austin's pages turning o'er and o'er :
 Questions of God's foreknowledge filled his mind
 With restless thoughts and terrors undefined ;
 Till, by his frightened fancies led astray
 From doubt to doubt, he came to blank dismay.
 Just then a simple brother passed along,
 And to our Lady sang a joyous song ;
 Who, when he saw the priest so sore oppressed,
 His carol ceased, and humbly him addressed :
 " You seem unhappy, father ; may I know
 If in that Latin book you find your woe ?
 Forgive me, father, if I seem too bold,
 For pain is oft relieved when it is told."
 " Ah ! brother," sadly then the priest replied,
 " You simple souls have joys to us denied ;
 You laugh and sing because you ponder not
 The mysteries deep of man's eternal lot.
 But would you know what question racks my
 brains,—
 Alas ! 'tis this : Who knows what God ordains ?"

"Nay, father, pardon ; to my simple mind
 You look for comfort where you cannot find.
 If you would seek refreshment from the heat
 The ocean rolls its waters to your feet ;
 Why strain your eyes across the boundless plain ?
 Why to the distant billows cry in vain :
 ' In central ocean lies a hidden cave,
 Bring thence the brine my weary feet to lave ' ?
 So is God's gracious Providence outspread
 With depths unfathomed by the pilot's lead.
 Yet why repine ? Enough if we explore
 The ebb and flow upon the neighbouring shore.
 The tide of daily grace brings daily joy,
 Why, seeking further, present peace destroy ? "
 The doctor paused in thought, but paused not
 long,
 Then joined the brother in his joyous song.

THOUGHTS IN A CROWD.

How say men, in the city's roar
 God's voice must needs be drowned,
 And in the city's myriad sights
 No trace of God is found ?

I hear His Holy name proclaimed
 By these discordant cries,
 Better than by the thunder-peals
 That roll in autumn-skies.
 The murmur of the forest pines,
 The voice of ocean's strife,
 Say not to me : Thy *End* is God ;
 Like this vast stream of life.
 Here souls immortal hurrying seek
 Their cravings to appease,
 Yet farther still, as they advance
 Their soul's horizon flees.
 The goal of all is happiness
 Whatever road they try,
 While every onward step proclaims :
 Earth does not satisfy—
 These busy streets to thoughtful minds
 Are proofs of Paradise,
 And with tumultuous voice they cry :
 " God only can suffice ".
 And cities tell this truth of God,
 Not writ in Alpine snows :
 "*God's shadow makes the toil of earth,*
God's substance heaven's repose".
 For good God's shadow is, and all
 Some seeming good pursue,

And all seek God unconsciously
On false roads, as on true.
Hearts made for God, for God must seek
In universal quest,
And those that seek aright shall find,
And finding shall have rest.
While Athens built her myriad fanes
To every idol known,
One altar to the "Unknown God"
Disproved her gods of stone.
And Paul bewailed that sons of God
For God should blindly grope,
And felt his heart within him burn
To teach a surer hope.
So here in fanes to Passions built
Ten thousand hearts seek rest,
Yet restless all, and craving still,
An "Unknown God" attest.
Then let us mix with men, and share
Their pleasure and their pain,
Turning our hearts and theirs to God,
Lest all our lives be vain.
Deep thoughts of God may fill the soul,
In wood or lonely glen,
But love of God who died for man,
Leads back to haunts of men.

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